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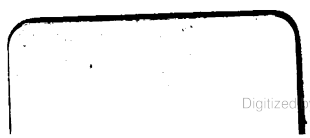

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MANUEL;

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS:

AS PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF BERTRAM.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1817.

Price 4s. 6d.

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Northumberland-court, Strand, London.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MANUEL, COUNT VALDI ..... Mr. KEAN.

DE ZELOS, his Kinsman ..... Mr. RAE.

TORRISMOND, De Zelos' Son ..... Mr. WALLACK.

MONCALDE, a Monk ..... Mr. BENGOUGH.

MENDIZABEL, VELASCO, TORRALVA ..... Nobles of Cordova — Mr. HOLLAND. Mr. COVENEY. Mr. KENT.

PEREZ, a Servant ..... Mr. BARNARD.

GUIDE ..... Mr. POWEL.

ALMORAD, a Moor ..... Mr. J. P. COOKE.

VICTORIA, Daughter to Don Manuel .. Miss SOMERVILLE.

XIMENA, Daughter to De Zelos ..... Mrs. KNIGHT.

Attendants, &c.

SCENE—*Cordova, afterards Almunecar.*

TIME—*After the Battle of Tolosa, in which the Spaniards defeated the Moors in the neighbourhood of Cordova.*

*** The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas are omitted in the Representation.

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TO

WALTER SCOTT, ESQ.

This Tragedy

IS

DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Primâ dicte mihi, summâ dicende Camœnâ
——— quod spiro et placeo (si placeo) tuum est.

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Just published,

A SEVENTH EDITION of BERTRAM; or, The Castle of St. Aldobrand: a Tragedy.

BY THE REV. R. C. MATURIN.

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PREFACE.

Of my first dramatic attempt so little notice was taken by Reviewers, that I was deprived of those opportunities of improvement, of which, I hope, I should have been willing to avail myself.

An Author can scarcely be expected to correct faults which are not pointed out to him, and which, perhaps, he will be slow in discovering for himself.

One objection indeed reached me:—it was said that Bertram drew no tears. The answer is obvious,—the subject did not admit of it. Would it not be reckoned an irrelevant criticism to say, that no one weeps for Macbeth or Richard?

Against the alleged immoral tendency of Bertram, I must try to defend myself. If Tragedy is not allowed to exhibit crimes and passions, what is left for her to exhibit?—If

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crime is attended with punishment as its consequence, I conceive the interests of morality are not compromised; and that delicacy seems rather fastidious which shrinks from the exposure of a crime, which is, perhaps, more than many others, degrading to a nation, and destructive of the peace and order of society.

I now willingly cease writing about myself, and turn to a more grateful subject—to Lord BYRON, and the Committee of Drury-lane Theatre. I rejoice in taking the first opportunity allowed me to offer my acknowledgments for the liberality which condescended to recognise the claims of an obscure stranger. To the Rev. Dr. WEBB, of Dublin, one of my brother-curates, my thanks are eminently due for the use of his valuable library, accorded to me with that politeness which distinguishes its highly-respectable possessor.

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PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MR. S. PENLEY.

THE Bard, who, till your favour grac'd his name,
And cheer'd his outset on the path to fame,
With unrewarded zeal had toil'd to use
The fancied favour of the serious Muse,
A vent'rous suppliant, dares again address
The friends, whose plaudits were his first success.

Should, then, his tragic numbers please no more,
(Who may not fail, where JOHNSON fail'd before?)
Forbear harsh blame, nor deem *yourselves* exempt,—
Your kindness lur'd him to the rash attempt.
But should (more grateful thought!) his plaintive tale
Wake the soft tear, and o'er the heart prevail,
From self-approving breasts your praise will burst,
To hail the genius that yourselves have nurst.

When the high deeds, long lost in time's expanse,
Of Moor and Spaniard realiz'd romance,
Your Bard has fabled his sad scene, to shew
A maiden's constancy and father's woe.
From Erin, sister Isle! he trembling sends
His vent'rous off'ring to his British friends;
Nor envious scoff nor party feud we fear,
To mar the welcome of the stranger here.

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MANUEL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Night—a Street in the City of Cordova—a Gothic gate in the back ground. A Monastery illuminated.

Hymn by the Monks.

CITY, deliver'd from the sword,
Arise, and call upon the Lord!
Lift up in praise thy midnight voice;
Rejoice, thou rescued city, rejoice!

God chose no arm of mortal might,
He chose no name of glorious fame;
A *David* smote their giant strength,
A *stripling* brought their hosts to shame.

[*Sound of rejoicing without.*

Enter Perez and Moncalde.

MON. Who is this *youth*—this stripling?—Can it be?—

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PER. Oh, welcome, father, in this hour of joy!
MON. And welcome thou, for I have much to ask;
These midnight voices tell a wond'rous tale
Of Spain deliver'd, and the Moors o'erthrown.
But, who has wrought this thing?
PER. Who but Alonzo?
Aye, our Alonzo—our young warrior—
Our Lord Don Manuel's son.
MON. All-powerful Heav'n
Who to the task that splits the trenchant blade
Dost whet th' unapt and edgeless instrument—
Who by a stripling's arm deliv'rance wrought
Where manhood vailed its might!—Nay, tell me all—
From lone and distant pilgrimage I come,
And was from slumber startled by the shouts
That heralded your tidings——
PER. Hear it, Spain!
Rescued Cordova, hear!—From Montiel's field
To Guadalquiver's mouth, by east and west
The Moor hath left the land, or stays to spread
The mountain-eagle's feast.—My native river,
Upon thy beautiful banks no swarthy brow
Uprears the turban-fold—no wild lelille
Makes answer to the gong and atabal—
And on the minaret the voice is still
That by pale twilight call'd to pray'r unholy
The misbelieving race!
MON. Praise ye the saints!
I am the ancient beadsman of his house,
And well remember with how many a pray'r

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I bless'd his girded sword, and bid his arm
Gripe with unfailing might the crosletted shield
Against the foeman's dint.

PER. Aye, father, such were easy ministry;—
I am the ancient vassal of his house,
And well remember with how proud a grasp
(While death rode harbinger) I bore his banner
High in the van of chivalry, when first
The youthful knight to battle rode——

MON. Enough, my son!—Yet well I love thy zeal!
Where dost thou hasten now?

PER. I haste to cheer
Our ancient lord with his Alonzo's fame.
Oh, how he will fling back his aged locks,
And lift his eye, and lock his wither'd hands,
And, with the step and impulse of his youth,
Tread proudly in his halls.

MON. He loves him as no earthly thing should be,
In the scale of duty, lov'd—makes him a god
Shrined in his heart, and does him worship there—
And though all noble, lovely, honor'd qualities
Do grace the youth, yet, where to such is paid
The homage that diviner things do claim,
'Tis proud and fond idolatry.

PER. Farewell!
Or will you journey onward in our company?

MON. I have *vows to pay*, and beads to tell—and here,
Within this city, gifted shrines there are
Mine orisons are vowed to;—yet I trust

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These sandal'd footsteps, imped by joyful duty,
May yet o'ertake the march of mailed feet.

PER. We'll do your greetings.

MON. Look, Perez, there is one, who of our joy
Is not susceptive or participant :—
That is De Zelos, kinsman to Don Manuel—
Long deem'd successor to his ample honors.
For many years without an heir he liv'd ;
Alonzo's birth restor'd the father's hopes,
And crush'd the kinsman's.
Needy he lives, neglected by Don Manuel,
Who, in his idolized son, almost forgets
That human beings tread the earth.

PER. I've heard he hates his kinsman's prosp'rous house ;
Is it in man to hate the young Alonzo ?

MON. Oh, sir, to needy men
The triumphs of the prosperous are crimes.

PER. See how he strides and shoulders through the crowd,
Wrapping in jealous folds his scanty cloak,
As if a touch i' th' press pollution were
To his proud vesture's hem.—Aye, now he eyes us
With look of mute and sullen scorn, and smile,
Wrinkling his hollow cheek in mockery
At our glad burst of triumph. In good faith,
I'll ring a peal in his proud ear shall stun it.

[*Exeunt. Shouts without.*

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Enter De Zelos, looking back.

Aye, shout, ye senseless crowd! torment the air!
Who but Alonzo? Nothing but Alonzo!
The very storks upon your steeple-tops
Do make more seemly clatter.
I have come forth, not that I love the light,
But that the broad beams of the laughing sun,
Which seem to mock the *wretchedness* they shine on,
Are yet less hateful than *its* sight at home.
The bed not form'd for rest—the untrimm'd hearth,
Where fire ne'er glows—the walls undeck'd by hanging,
Save what the spider weaves—the heedless lacquey,
Whose muttering service, half a threat, half insult,
The needy master dares not hear!—Oh, this—
This household hell to shun, I'd walk unhail'd—
Their foolery, bell-peal, and trumpet-bray,
I'd bear—aye, bear to hear Alonzo's praise!

Enter Mendizabel, the Justiza, with his train.

DE ZEL. Good day.
MEN. Good day. *(carelessly, and exit.)*

(De Zelos bows to the attendants, who scarce note him.)

DE ZEL. No more!—Well, be it so.
Ye insects in my heat that basked and buzzed,
And sung your summer-songs of flattery,

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But, parting, leave your stings.—They're gone,—all gone!
How desolate the poor man's path is left!
Oh! where's the spectre like grim Poverty,
Whose with'ring shade at height of noon can scare
The populous street, making its way a desert;
And leave the gaunt and lonely form to watch
The echo of his own sad steps?
Shall it be always thus?

Enter Torrismond.

DE ZEL. Now, sir, what do you here?
TORRIS. 'Tis your will, sir,
I should do nothing, and should nothing be—
I am an idle, worthless, gazer here;
An empty shouter in the pageant's train,
Who should have led its van.
DE ZEL. You wrong yourself, brave sir, you're here in place,
Train-bearer in your kinsman's pageantry;
Pointing with finger prompt, and patient office,
To its proud blazonry; and haply deeming,
As men who do some pompous palace shew,
That parting Wonder will requite thee well
With—"Here, good fellow, for thy pains!"
TORRIS. Are you my father? Look at this untried arm:
Shame that its waving only cleaves the air,
And not the Moslem turban! Feel this breast:
It beats with anguish, yea, with agony,

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To hear a father's cold unnatural taunts,
Mocking the shame his will has doom'd me to,
But never thröbb'd with fear.

DE ZEL. Degen'rate boy,
Who, to thy wild, unpractis'd chivalry,
Wouldst sacrifice the noble pride that hides
Its festering wounds even in its rags, and boasts
It is not hurt.—Aye, thou wouldst flaunt it bravely,
A tattered banner, and a rusty glaive
And lance, upon whose brown and blunted point
Dishonor sits to mock the baffled aim.
Wouldst thou not blush to hear the lackeys whisper,
" Is that Alonzo's henchman or his cousin?"—
What, burns thy cheek?———
Let me hold down thy fancy to the picture
Of gallants in their train, high-plumed helms,—
Bright harness, barded steeds, caparisons,—
And thou despised and lagging in the rear!

TORRIS. I'd *not be in the rear!*
Give me the shield that on your chamber-walls
Doth as in mockery hang—give me the falchion
Whose massive and gigantic blade doth rust
In sheathed idleness—give me the banner
Whose drooping and unhonored folds Decay
Hath for her pale vest chosen—Give me these—
And, let them be my harness or my shroud,
I reck not!——

DE ZEL. Away!—
Wert thou thy father's son, thou'dst starve, die, rot,
Before, to the cold, searching, pitiless blast,

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Thou'dst bare the aching wound: it, passing, galls,
Then whistles by regardless.—We are poor—
Then let us hide it; for it is the crime
That men do loath.—Let me sit down in solitude,
Shunning and shunn'd—Let no man pass my door,
Or tread the grass Neglect hath planted there—
No prying eye o'erlook my scanty meal—
No hand uplift my latch, to greet or mock me;—
And, when I die, o'er my unburied corse
My lank and pitiful dog the requiem howl—
For Monks, unpaid, won't chant it.—See thy lot—
Bend thy proud soul to it—unless—perchance—

TORRIS. Said you—unless?—

DE ZEL. I did not speak to thee;
—Or, if I did, thou wast unwise to mark me—
For, from the mind by moody passion stirr'd,
Strange sounds break forth the will doth claim no share in,
And Memory dares not own.—How now, Ximena—

Enter Ximena, veiled, as from church.

Wearying the saints for young Alonzo's safety?—
Why should the poor rejoice?—
They have no country: it is Mockery's voice
Bids them rejoice, and gives them nought to joy in.—
But 'tis the age's foppery, and the beggar
Lights his last faggot for his country's glory—
Forgetting, while he eyes the straw-fed blaze,
He must be cold to-morrow!

TORRIS. Oh, how the cursed selfishness of want [*Aside.*
Dries up each spring Nature hath open'd in us!

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XIM. My sire would chide,
Thought his Ximena thus.
But tell me, is the young Alonzo safe?—

DE ZEL. What boots it thee to know?—Go, ply thy distaff—
Thy weeds are thin and rent—'twill better suit thee.

XIM. I ask but is Alonzo safe—

DE ZEL. Alonzo!
How's this? That name again!—What dost thou mean?
Come hither, girl; shrink not, but listen to me:—
In Fate's dark quiver there doth lurk no dart,
Barbed and triple-edg'd with want, shame, scorn,
But I would rather bear its keenest rankling
Than meet that thought even in my dreams.—*No; hate him;*
That may be for thy peace.

[*Ximena falls weeping into the arms of Torrismond.*

Enter a Messenger.

MES. My lord, Don Manuel greets his kinsmen well,
And bids them to a feast he holds to-night,
In honor of his brave son's victory.

TORRIS. By heaven, I'll hail him with a brother's love!
Hath the young warrior reached his father's halls?

MES. He trusts to win them by the setting sun.

DE ZEL. (*Aside.*) An' if he do——

MES. Your answer, sir; so please you—

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DE ZEL. Sir, we will go—and therefore will we go
That the chill aspect of his needy kinsmen
May add a zest to his luxurious banquet—
As revellers crown their summer-cups with ice,
To make the draught delicious.—Sir we'll go.
[*Exit Messenger.*
Yes, we will go, and shame him in these vestments.
And canst thou, Torrismond, where gallants brave
Their jewell'd barrets bear, rear thy dark locks
Without a blush, in Nature's negligence?

TORRIS. I go to greet a warrior, not a *Galliard.*

DE ZEL. And thou, Ximena, art *thou* too divested
Of all that to thy sex's bosom clings?
Canst thou in those poor weeds?——No, go, make suit
To proud Victoria, that her humblest handmaid
Will, of her grace, accord thee meet adornments
To take a lute, and mix among her minstrels.

XIM. Oh, speak not thus of that most gentle maid.

TORRIS. By heaven, my father, you do wrong Victoria.

DE ZEL. What! thou, too—madman?—

XIM. Wring not your daughter's heart; she is your child,
And shames not by her father's side to stand
In weeds that suit his state.

DE ZEL. Away! away!
The spirit's wound doth never fester more
Than when the helpless, but officious, hand
Tortures it with vain soothings.—

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Was it not told me, when my hasty mood
Slighted thy tale last night, how the late storm
Wrench'd from its fair and fertile bed a pine,
And flung it in a low unsightly bottom?
Chance-rooted there, the stranger-branches wave,
And nod in uncouth beauty.—Was't not so?—

XIM. It was, my lord.

DE ZEL. Why, then, such things may be.
Come, to the feast—Away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A passage in the Castle of Don Manuel. Servants with lights passing along.

1st SER. More lights, more lights, the guests are hastening in!
Our lord, Don Manuel, will receive his son
In yon pavilion.

2d SER. Wherefore comes he not?
'Tis wondrous late.—

1st SER. Nay, never heed thou that.
On such a night of joy—

2d SER. The night grows murky—
How soon the lovely evening was o'ercast!

1st SER. What boots it thee to mark the gloomy night?
Go, bear those torches swiftly to the garden,
And bid the minstrels haste. [*Exeunt.*

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SCENE III.

A sumptuous Pavilion in the Gardens, through arches in the back ground—A view of the Gardens lit up, with groups of Company—A strain of cheerful Music—Manuel, Victoria, and Guests, splendidly dressed, discovered—Manuel conversing.

MAN. No, no, not *many* evenings, gen'rous friends;
Not many such as this—Life grants them not—
There is a thick oppression on my heart—
A fulness here—I know not how to name it.—
Joy comes to us a splendid, hurrying, stranger;
And, ere we feel him welcome Joy, is gone—
But Grief appears a dull and daily guest,
Who near us long his wonted seat has taken,
Till that his heaviness no burden seems.

VICT. Greet not our noble happy guests, my father,
With such unjoyous sounds.

MAN. Thou dost remind me—
Aye—Speak we of Tolosa—Is't not thus
The field is nam'd where my Alonzo fought?

VICT. It is, my lord.

MAN. Why, then, we'll talk of it.

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(Enter De Zelos, Torrismond, and Ximena.)

MAN. Kinsman, I greet you well. (*Carelessly.*)

(*Victoria goes to them, and appears to make amends for their cold reception by others.*)

MAN. Nay, is there not
A heavy, sultry, faintness in the night?

1st GUEST. A lovelier sun-set never lit your towers.

MAN. I mark'd it too—Did you not mark it, friends?
I saw the setting sun go glorious down
'Mid clouds of form and hue inimitable—
Like some high chieftain in his victor-tent
O'ercanopied with glory—with his train
Of floating banners crimson-hued, and plumes
Tinted with gorgeous colouring—blazonry
Of hand divine!—
But round his sinking orb a dark cloud hung—
A sable speck malignant—through whose shade
All the fair pageantry of lights and hues
An ominous and gloomy lustre shed.

GUESTS. We mark'd it not.

MAN. Was it not wond'rous strange?

VICT. Good Perez, rouse thy master with some tale
Of my brave brother's deeds.—
His spirit will kindle at the stirring theme,
As starts the slumb'ring warrior from his dream
At the far trumpet's sound.

TOR. Nay, let us hear some of his own high deeds.
I love to hear an ancient warrior's tale,
When stirred by recent glory.

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MAN. Aye, many things come thronging to my brain
Feverish and troubled, but they make me feel
I was a warrior once.
Heard ye the tale of Osma? Sword of Heaven,
Thou'st put on strength as in the ancient days—
Days of the deeds of old!—
Night hung on van and rear: we moved in darkness,
And heavily did count our echoed steps:
As men who marched to death!—Osma, thy field
(When the pale morn broke on the battle's verge)
Seemed as an ocean, where the Moorish turbans
Toss'd like the white sea-foam! Amid that ocean
We were to plunge and—perish!—
For ev'ry lance we couch'd the Moslem host
Drew twenty scimitars—and, when the cry
"God and St. Jago!" burst from our pale lips,
Seem'd as if every Spanish soldier peal'd
His requiem, not his battle-shout!—Oh Sirs!
We stood not then on terms of war,—devices
To give the coward the cold praise of art:—
We fought with life and soul upon the issue,—
With sword (once drawn) whose battle knew no end,—
With hand, that, wedded to the faithful hilt,
Knew no divorce but death, and held it *then*
With grasp which death unlocks not!—
We charg'd beneath their javelins' iron show'r,
Clashed cymbal, sabre-gleam, and banner's float,
That hid the light between!—We charged in blood,
And left our trampling steeds to tread out lives

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That foil'd our blunted swords!—We charged in death;
Flung life away, as an incumb'ring garment;
And, like the *Greek*, grappled with glory *naked!*
'Twas noon,—when, like a mountain earthquake-shook,
I saw their battle reel.
Then waned the troubled Crescent, while aloft,
Banner'd in chivalrous display, the Cross,
Like meteor, flew and blaz'd!—Miramolin,
Like the proud leader of the evil host,
The first in stature, glory, and despair,
Still trod the edge of battle—still his sword
Swept with resistless range where thickest fell
The bloody harvest round!—"Miramolin—
"Turn, turn," I cried!—"'tis Manuel calls."—
[*Falls back exhausted.*
Oh! I had voice to hush the battle *then*,
But have not voice to tell it now!—

VIC. Nay, cease—

It shakes his feeble frame—forbear, my father!—

MAN. (*Starting up vehemently, and describing by gestures.*)

I smote him with the lance—with this hand smote him—
This trembling hand—whose wither'd joints but serve
To bless Alonzo now—
[*Victoria offers Manuel a cup of wine. As he is tasting, a horn is heard.*

MAN. I need no cordial—'tis Alonzo's horn.

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Alonzo's Page enters, bearing his Banner.

MAN. Where is my son?

PAGE. Is he not here already?—
Through the dark wood he took his way for speed,
Dismiss'd his weary train, and, all unguarded,
Pursued his path alone.

VIC. The wood?—Oh, Heaven!—

MEND. It is a fearful, lonely place; and there
Have murders oft been done.

MAN. Away, ye slaves! bear torches, skirt the forest—
Pursue the track like blood-hounds—make its darkness
As bright as summer noon.

MEND. Accept my services. [*Exeunt Guests.*

(Armed Vassals with torches seen crossing the Garden.)

MAN. To go alone—Oh, madness, madness!—

VIC. Fear not—
For you shall quickly feel him in your arms.

MAN. Shall I? [*A long pause.*
By Heaven, I hear his courser's tread—
The matchless steed I gave him!—I could swear
To every foot-tramp.—

VIC. Hark!—

XIM. Hark!—

[*Manuel attempts to move, but is unable.*

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TOR. *(returning slowly.)*
It *is* his war-steed, but—he comes alone!
VIC. *(to Manuel.)*
Nay, look not thus; thou know'st it is his wont
On foot to scale the green and pleasant slope
That to the portal leads.—
MAN. *(starting)* And so it is—
TOR. *(faintly)*
There is a stain of blood upon the saddle—
VIC. It is the foeman's blood—think'st thou not so?—
TOR. A broken lance is trailing from the stirrup—
MAN. *(rushing out)*
That lance he never quitted but with life—
Away, away!—
VIC. Oh, hold!—The night is dread,
And fierce and foul the storm comes sweeping on.
MAN. *(with a frantic laugh)*
The storm—ha, ha, ha!—'Tis here, and here—
[striking his head—Exit.
VIC. Fly, Torrismond, and guard him.
[Exit Torrismond.

Victoria and Ximena sink into each other's arm.

VIC. Oh Heaven!—oh, what a night! oh, speak, Ximena,
One word of comfort or of hope!
XIM. I cannot.

[Manuel is brought back senseless in the arms of De Zelos and the servants; Torrismond following.

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TOR. His broken helm bloody, and soil'd with clay—

(Drawing his sword vehemently.)

Oh, if on earth the murderer can be found!—

[*At these words Manuel starts from their arms, and stands pointing with a terrible look at De Zelos.*

MAN. There!—

[*The curtain drops.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Gardens of Manuel's Castle—a clouded Moon—a part of the Castle seen on one side of the Garden. Torrismond enters much agitated, after an unsuccessful search.

TOR. HOPELESS and desperate—no trace, no sound!—
The forest hath no voice—the giant trees
Stand in mute loneliness—and, when the wind
Sweeps their dark branches, 'tis like mockery
Of the long loud cries that vainly pierced their darkness.
The storm hath ceased—a deep unnatural stillness
Sits brooding on the night, like a stern soul
Jealous of its foul secret—
Break (in thy troubled beauty) forth, O Moon!
And shed thy cold light on my throbbing brow.
Thy wan and sunken gleam, that with the clouds
Holds dubious conflict, to my fancy pictures
Hope striving with Despair!—

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Victoria enters.

VIC. Who wanders there at this late hour?
Oh Torrismond, canst *thou* not speak of hope?
All are return'd, and all brought back despair!
'Twas desolate to hear the heavy steps
That on the echoing draw-bridge rung the knell
Of list'ning Hope, that turn'd, and met Despair.
Their footsteps had a voice, and in mine ear
Told what voice could not utter—but still thou camest not—
My last hope clung to thee—

TOR. ——————All hope hath fail'd—

VIC. Was there no sound amid the forest's darkness?
Was there no trace along the river's verge?
Oh God! had I been there, and a sad sister,
Like me, had sought in anguish for a brother,
I would have dug earth's core, scoop'd rivers' beds,
Till I could say, He's here!—

TOR. There is no hope—

VIC. Oh! Hope will long abide, and hardly part
When that its mansion is a sister's bosom.
There have been those who in their infant years
Were lost, and parents in their agony
Would have giv'n worlds to weep upon their graves
The tears they shed on air!—Yet such were found;
And must not he,—a youth in manhood's prime?
Ten thousand thoughts, that, but an hour o'erpast,
Would have struck daggers through a soul at ease,
Seem to its mis'ry like a blessing now.
He might have wander'd in the forest's maze—

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He might in some lone mansion have found shelter;
Speak not to me, unless thou think'st like me!

TOR. I think—*I* dare not think—Where is thy father?

VIC. He hath just sunk into a fearful slumber—

TOR. Oh that such slumber, fearful as it is—
Broke by dark dreams and horrible imagery—
Would steep my senses too!—

VIC. See where morning dawns!
And morning ever to the eyes of wretches
Smiles as it brought good tidings in its smile.

TOR. Hope for us both, Victoria! cling to it,
For I have none.

VIC. Dost thou speak darkly too?
Thy look is like thy father's!—Torrismond,
Terror and doubt are on me——

TOR. Stop, Victoria!
If the free wind did dare to whisper *that*,
I'd tell it, in the face of Heav'n, it lied.
Art thou so wretched in thy soul, Victoria,
And canst not feel for one more wretched still?
Guilt's conscious smile might envy Misery's tear.

VIC. Oh, Misery feels no suffering but its own,
Or I had marked thy pale brow, and the drops
That weariness wrung from it.

TOR. 'Twas not weariness—
—No matter what—my soul seems changed within me.
Is this the spot where last we met, Victoria?
Is this the light by which I last beheld thee?
Love with that beautiful light held harmony:

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The very beam that shows thee sadly *now*
Glow'd on the paradise of meeting lovers.
We wander'd through these faint and flecker'd shades,
Like spirits in Elysium!—Was it a dream?

VIC. Oh, talk not thus; all lighter feelings seem
A crime at this stern hour.
Despair and darkness are around us! We must part;
Like those whose parting hath no hope—hark! hark!

(Horn within.)

Perchance some tidings—hark! my father's summons,
And I have nought to bring him but—despair!

[*Exit.*

TOR. *(in gloomy meditation.)*
Can I not follow her?—I'm innocent:
Why should I shun the old man's fixed eye?
Thou serpent thought, whose damned sting is *here*,
I'll rend thee forth, or with thee rend my heart.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in the Castle. Manuel surrounded by the Guests.

MAN. And is he come?—Why doth he linger thus?
Who are those near me?
Stand back, stand back; ye keep me from his sight.

[*Recollecting himself, and falling back.*

Be dumb!—I know it all— [*In a gentler tone.*
My child, Victoria; mine own, *only* child,

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Come hither to me; fear not, answer truly.
Was it not all a dream?—the horrible night—
Nay, do not mock thy old unhappy father—.
In faith, I am past mocking. See these tears.

VIC. *(after a long struggle.)* I cannot speak to thee.

MAN. Thy silence speaks.
Are all the messengers return'd?

MEND. They are.

MAN. All?

MEND. All.

MAN. How prompt thou art to echo grief!

VIC. Moncalde is not yet returned; perhaps—

MAN. Aye, thou say'st well, *perhaps*—I am a fool,
For I had hope when came the first full swiftly,
And now I hope because the last doth linger.

MEND. All means that human agents could employ
Have been at work. The country is aroused;
The knights in armour guard the skirted forest:
Nor briery dell, nor tufted thicket there,
But by a hundred lances hath been searched.

MAN. Nay, speak not with such horrible certitude:
Give me a hope there is some spot unsearch'd,—
Some dark, unthought-of spot—it *must* be so!

MEND. Doubt not our faith or courage.

MAN. Ha, ha, ha!—
Oh that you were the veriest shrinking cravens,
Rather than he were lost!—

VIC. Gentle, my father!

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Cast not such shame upon your noble friends,
Who traced, at risk of life, the forest's darkness.

MAN. Aye! did they so?—why then (but be it *secret*)
I have a way to find him—I have thought on't.
Come near, my Lord Mendizabel—nay, nearer.
Let none but fathers search—they must prevail—
And yet he was a father who did this.—

VIC. Hush, hush, those dreadful sounds!—Oh, think not thus!

MEND. Speak not so felly of your kinsman.

MAN. Lord,
I am not mad—not yet—I am not mad—
I say, I swear, i' th' sight of awful Heaven,
If my Alonzo—if indeed—I cannot—
De Zelos is his murderer!—

VIC. Horrible! horrible!

Perez rushes in.

PER. Moncalde is returning.

MAN. (*vehemently*) I do retract—I do believe him innocent.
God grant him innocent! (*All turn to the door.*)

(*A long pause.*)

VIC. (*very reluctantly*) He comes—like one whose footing Hope supports not.

MAN. (*wildly.*) 'Tis false! 'tis false! he steps right joyfully,
Like one who, to a desp'rate father's ear,
Brings tidings of his son.—Oh, welcome, welcome!

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Enter Moncalde.

Thou comest with equal tread—It cannot be;
Thy message is despair.—
MONC. Hope is in Heaven:
On earth I know of none.
MAN. Mine head reels round.
Is this Moncalde? this the last sole plank
I grasp'd in my despair, and called it Life?—
Oh, I am wrecked by th' shore!—
VIC. (*Moncalde going to speak.*) Hold!—yet, my father—
MONC. There is a wild report—A peasant boy
Heard cries of murder in the midnight wood.—
MAN. Where is he?
Heard he the cries of murder?
Did he not hear De Zelos' name?—
MONC. I know not.
" But see! he comes to tell.

" *Enter Peasant, held by Manuel's vassals.*

" MAN. Come hither—Tremble not.—What hast
" thou seen?
" PEA. Where the dark forest overhangs the river,
" Just at the twilight hour—
" MAN. The very hour—
" PEA. I heard such fearful cries — such blood-
" choak'd moans—
" MAN. Was it Alonzo's voice?
" PEA. My noble lord,
" I never heard his voice.

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" MAN. Oh, that thou hadst not!—
" Did he not call on me, call on his father?—
" I ask thee, was't Alonzo's cry?—
" VIC. He knows not.
" MAN. Impossible! It had that blessed sound,
" Whose language strikes upon the human heart,
" And, ere he spoke his name, men felt they knew
" him.

MONC. (*looking out*) De Zelos comes.

MAN. What! hath he slain, and comes to take possession?
Off! I will see him. Will he dare to meet me?

Enter De Zelos.

Here, here I am!—Aye, look me dead! I'm old,
Feeble, and spent—I am scarce worth a murder—
But 'twas a baser blow that stabbed Alonzo.

DE ZEL. (*appealing to the guests of Mendizabel*)
Grave lords, you hear my injuries:—this old lord,
In fierce and uncheck'd malice, loads my name
With infamy too foul to bear, were't not
Too weak for babbling childhood to believe.
Aye, even last night, when, strongly touched with pity,
I raised his sinking frame, he shrunk from mine,
As from a serpent's touch.

MAN. And so it was.

DE ZEL. If this be but the impotent rage of grief,
Whose phrensy, like the scorpion's, wounds itself,
I pardon it.

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MAN. *Thou pardon me?* [*Great agony.*

VIC. For shame! for mercy, hence;
It is not noble, manly; 'tis not human
To press upon a mourner's wretchedness.

DE ZEL. 'Tis true, fair dame, and wise as it is true:
De Zelos must resign his honor's care
Because a lady weeps.

VIC. Oh, take him hence.

MAN. He shall not go.
De Zelos, I arraign thee here of murder,
In sight of Heaven, and of this land. Justiza
Mendizabel, dispenser of our laws,
I call on thy grave office for redress
And means, and leave and laws, to urge my cause
Before th' assembled council of the land.

DE ZEL. Away! I fling thy false and foolish slanders
From my clear name as lightly as I shake
Thy worthless weight from my disburthened arm.
[*Flinging him off.*

MEND. You have appealed to law, deluded lord!
To-morrow, in our solemn halls of justice,
Th' accuser and th' accused shall both appear.
Till then, my lord, you'll be my guest, not prisoner.

DE ZEL. My noble lord, I thank your courtesy.
Oh wealth, already how thy magic works! [*aside.*
'Tis Valdi's future heir he greets as guest.

MEND. My office binds me to these irksome forms;
But, ere they are fulfilled, I first would try

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If that your kinsman with such desperate fierceness
Will urge this hopeless charge.
Don Manuel, think on this unnatural conflict—
Think of the weakness of this hollow cause—
Think of your noble kinsman's spotless name!—

MAN. Think of my son!—

VIC. Oh, yet retire, I pray you;
Scarce does his Reason hold her doubtful seat,
And one rude shock may strike her from 't for ever.

MEND. We will not press upon your sorrows, lady.
My honored lord, I pray you, hence with me;
The vassals eye us with stern jealous looks,—
There may be danger here.

DE ZEL. *(Fiercely to Manuel.)*—We meet to-morrow!— [*Exeunt.*

MAN. What! dost go—go to prepare thy cause,—
To whisper to the credulous venal judges,
And lie, and bribe, and sooth them to corruption,
As the light fanning of the vampire's wing
Lulls the protracted slumber into death?
And sit I here mid women, and mid weeping?
No, I will rouse me.
I must be prompt and eager with this adversary.
To-night I'll to Cordova—" Ho!—within!—
" Prepare my chariot—arm my vassals—haste!—
" Caparison my fleetest steeds for th' journey!—
" But let their housings all be black—look to 't!
" I will, with such a retinue, come on
" Cordova; and her guilty towers shall tremble,

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" As if the Moor again were at her gates.
Armies of griefs shall troop on my sad side:
Whole hosts of banded groans, tear-wasted nights,
And pining days, that wake to curse the sun,
Yet have no hope in darkness—come with me!
Why dost thou loiter?

VIC. Oh, my hapless father,
Brave not the stormy wild, and pitiless hour!
Scarce hath the morning gleam'd.

MAN. Away! away! (*Struggles.*
The time is wearing—Forward to Cordova!

(*Servants enter in tumultuous preparation.—He staggers from weakness.*)

VIC. What! on these tottering limbs! oh, stay, for mercy!

MAN. Away! I needed but Alonzo's arm—
Hasten, ye loitering slaves!
[*Going out with feeble step.*
By Heaven I'll smite to the dust the arm that stays me! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

" *A Cave on the Banks of the Guadalquivir; the River*
" *seen by a pale Dawn through an Arch in the Back-*
" *ground; Almorad standing with a Torch at the*
" *Entrance; a Boat coming down the Stream.*

" ALM. They come! I hear the dashing of their oars.
" It hath that ominous sound the listener's heart
" Beats heavy time to.

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" If there doth live in lifeless things a sense
" Obscure, portentous, such as, without voice,
" Tells, not unheard, its true and terrible tale
" To the soul of man within him—if this be
" Be hush'd, thou fearful spirit of the place,
" To our blind and stifled murmurs—Rocks, reply
" not!
" For it is done, and in your cavern tomb
" The secret sleeps for ever.
" (*The Boat arrives—the Assassins debark.*)
" ALM. Have ye sped?
" 1st. Ass. (*Pointing to the Boat.*) Look there, and
" ask not.
" 2d. Ass. Wouldst thou view it closer?
" ALM. No, not for many worlds.
" Ass. Thy task must now be ended; lead to the
" cave;
" The bark is waiting, and the morning breaks.
" Why move you not?—Here's gold for you.
" (*Gives a purse.*)
" ALM. I know thy power, thou bright and glittr'ing
" devil!
" To plunge in death the soul of him that seeks thee:
" Reverse the spell in which thou'st bound my spirit,
" And I will worship thee.
" He will be ever with me, ever near me,
" In daylight and in darkness.—Thou grim shape,
" Am I for ever thine?
" 1st. Ass. Come, come, no more delay.

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" ALM. Shall no blest hour
" Give me to vindicate my soul from guilt,
" And stand my own avenger upon him
" Who led me into crime?
" 1st. Ass. Come, Almorad.
" *(Almorad shews great reluctance and horror; at*
" *length they drag him to the Boat, which he enters*
" *with them, and it rows away.)*"

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

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ACT III.

SCENE I.

A splendid Apartment in the house of De Zelos, who is discovered regarding the magnificence around him with delight.

DE ZEL. OH, how prosperity doth gild our merits!
How virtuous have these few short wondrous hours
Made the despis'd De Zelos! Sage, grave men,
Shame not in flattery's summer-dew to thaw
The ice in which my poverty had cased them;
Yea, such vile comments on their baseness make,
That strumpet Fortune seems a vestal to them.—
They knew it would be thus: Heaven would not leave
Itself unvindicated in my fortunes.
Beshrew me but the word was on my lip,
Even to the first that hailed me.—'Grave Justiza,
Am I the beggar whom your pamper'd train
Pushed yesterday from their insulted path?'
That noble blood, for whose dilated channels
Their hollow thanks mock heaven, within my veins
Want might have turned to ice—and they had reck'd not!
Those lips, where flattery breathless 'tendance gives,
Had wanted praise, if they had wanted bread;

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And steps, that to my crowded threshold throng,
Had trod upon my grave, nor paused to read
Want laid its victim there!——Ximena, ha!

Ximena enters in mourning.

Ungracious and perverse! whence is that garb,
When all around smiles in the light of joy?
The gifts of noble friends have made our hovel
Shew like a palace;—even the bending usurers—
Aye, the swart tribe, whom our religion loves not—
Have forc'd within my slowly-op'ning palm,
Which wonder lock'd, ingots of massive gold.
Canst thou view all this splendour's summer glow,
Yet be the passing cloud that dims its light?

XIM. I am a cloud that soon must glide away:
Chide it not in its passing. Oh, my father,
Even parting travellers to their transient mate
Do say farewell in kindly accent!
My days are number'd—Trust a broken heart—
Lightly I doff the weeds of costly state,
And gauds that women love, so, flung around me,
A virgin's shroud enfold a virgin's breast.
No coronal my weary temples bind,
So o'er my pale parch'd brow there drop in death
That pearl of price, a father's tear!

DE ZEL. What's this?
What whining dream of pastoral pageantry?
I'll have thee live, and love, and be a bride.
Didst thou not mark with what inventive art
Luxurious gallantry hath decked thy bower?—

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The silken awning wrought in looms of Ind'—
The cresset's fretted silver, whose soft light
Fell upon vased flowers—the broider'd footcloth,
On which the flatter'd step 'mid gardens trod—
All this rich magic of a master's touch,—
It was Mendizabel's gift, my child!—Mendizabel's!
The grave Justiza wooes thee for his bride.

XIM. I know a seat where still my soul is wand'ring—
A rugged seat, formed by an ancient buttress—
The wild rose canopied it, and the woodbine
Upon that old grey stone wrought tracery:—
There have I sat; it was in blessed hours—
Nor reck'd of silken couch or sculptured lamp—
For *he* was there, and the bright moon above us.

DE ZEL. Who? who was there?

XIM. Alonzo.

DE ZEL. Hear me, girl—*(much agitated.)*
Thou'lt drive thy father mad!—
Art thou a woman, and unmov'd by pomp?
Art thou a woman, and unsooth'd by love?
Art thou a woman, and untouch'd by pride?
I tell thee, and my soul is pledged—my soul—
Thou shalt be great—shalt be Mendizabel's bride,
And through the thronging streets thy gorgeous train
Blaze in all eyes, and blast the proud Victoria's!—

XIM. Oh, strive not with despair!—I know thou'd'st have me
A gay and courtly dame, in splendour flare—
But I was form'd to be an humble mate
To one whose partner is the worm!—My father,

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Spread o'er the castled cliff the dark grey ash;
On the proud mountain let the strong pine tower;
But leave the willow near its wedded stream;—
'Twill wither if you rend it from the bank
On which it loves to weep!—

DE ZEL. I'll have thee smile; aye, smile upon a lover—
Come to the trial, where this hoary dotard
Hath summon'd me—Nay, thou must come—I will it!—
There will thy noble suitor be—Look to it!—
Come to the hall, and come in other garb,
And give him there such gracious entertainment
As gentle dames to high-born wooers give.

ATTENDANT (*entering*). My lord, the Court awaits you.

DE ZEL. Well, I come—
Go deck thyself, and rave not of that spot
Where thy sick phantasy, like blighted spring,
Sits weaving withered garlands. [*Exit.*

XIM. There is a spot, a low and lonely one,
Pride will not envy me—'tis dark and cold;
But there the weary spirit turns in hope—
There the tir'd step of mortal pilgrimage
Reaches and rests—there slumber with Alonzo
The dreams that with his image liv'd and died.

(*Enter Torrismond. He starts.*)

TORRIS. My sister—ha! each well-known face upbraids me—

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Yea, each familiar voice is agony—
Where is my father?

XIM. He hath parted hence. *(A long pause.)*

TORRIS. What dost thou think?

XIM. Think?

TORRIS. Aye, what dost thou fear?

XIM. I know not ought to fear.

TORRIS. Nor I; and yet,
To my stunned ear, than this accursed charge
The summoning angel's trump less terrible were.

XIM. Oh, it was but the phrensy of his dotage.

TORRIS. *(eagerly repeating her words.)* Aye—it *was* but the phrensy of his dotage.

XIM. Had the dim vision of his troubled eye
Glanc'd on you first, you had been first accused.

TORRIS. Me!—accused me!—Oh that he had!—I feel
Such inward lightness of a perfect heart,
I had forgiven—yea, I had blest—his phrensy.

ATTEND. *(entering.)* Lady, your father wonders at your stay.

XIM. I come—and wilt not thou, my brother?

TORRIS. I'll wander like a spirit round the walls;
I dare not enter them. [*Exeunt severally.*

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SCENE II.

The magnificent Gothic portico of the Hall of Justice, through an arch in the back ground. The Members of the Council are seen in their robes, passing along, with Attendants.

(Enter De Zelos, Toralva, and Velasco.)

TOR. Nay, be assured, my worthy honor'd lord,
The council will dismiss this cause with scorn.
DE ZEL. (His worthy honor'd lord—the villain!)
(*Aside.*)—Thanks!
VEL. This raving dotard must so fail in proof
Of what the madness of his grief alleges—
What plea—what ground—what solid evidence?
DE ZEL. (*forgetting himself.*) Shadow of evidence!
Impossible.
(*recovering.*) What, he hath lost his boy—and he must
wait
Like puling lover o'er the shrouded maid.
Doth not Spain boast of many a valiant youth,
Whose arm can strike in battle like Alonzo's?
TOR. Aye, many such, and, 'mongst the first, your
son.
DE ZEL. A froward boy! a froward boy!
VEL. How blest
Is sire in such a son, and such a daughter!
TOR. She is a gracious and a lovely lady;

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And her fair hand upon the grave Justiza
Shall meetly be bestow'd.

DE ZEL. *(breaking from them)* Fair Sir, you flatter me! [*Exeunt Torralva and Velasco.*

These fools, with their gross flattery, mock my mood,
Till shamed Credulity resigns her charge,
And Vanity lies perish'd—surfeit-slain!—

Enter Mendizabel as Justiza, splendidly habited.

MEND. My noble friend, I grieve to wear these robes
In such a cause as this.—

DE ZEL. Oh, my grave lord,
This is a homage we must sadly pay
To the delirium of unhappy age;
But here is one shall better thank your courtesy.

Enter Ximena.

Smile on him, or ne'er hope thy father's smile.

" XIM. *(Aside)* Yea, such a smile peace-porting
" spirits give
" To the wild baffled hopes of restless man."

DE ZEL. What, do they say the ancient lord in truth
Hath a sad journey ta'en?

MEND. He's here already:
With speed beyond a youth's he urges on,
And even now his train ascends the hall.

XIM. He hath no train—on his sad daughter's arm,
His sole support, he rests.

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DE ZEL. *(very sternly)* Hush, hush,
thou trifler!—
[*Gives her hand, with a frown, to Mendizabel, to lead her out,*
I will await your honours on the instant—
Forgotten matter presses on my brain.
[*Exeunt all but De Zelos. A long pause, during which he seems much agitated.*

DE ZEL. Impossible—impossible!
[*Rushes out.*

SCENE III.

The Hall of Justice. Mendizabel, seated under a canopy, at one side—De Zelos on a splendid seat near him—Judges, Attendants. Mendizabel, suddenly recollecting himself, and starting from his seat, draws De Zelos to the front of the stage.

MEND. My noble lord,
A word with you:—A trifle, but a strange one,
Had well nigh made my memory a truant:
A trifle—yet to this day's claim it doth
An indistinct and strange relation bear:—
This morn, a muffled stranger, darkly wrapt,
With marvellous and ceaseless importunity,
O'erbore my train's resistance ere I rose,
And rush'd into my chamber.—
Like some dark phantom by my couch it stood,
And seem'd to wrestle with some horrible image.

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I gazed upon him till, with heaving utterance,
As if a giant's hand grappled his throat,
He muttered forth—" De Zelos is a villain!"—

DE ZEL. *(Starting as from a trance)* *You did not see his face?*

MEND. No, but strange chance
Disclosed he was a Moor; for, as he spoke,
He placed his sable hand on mine.

DE ZEL. *You saw no face*
(Recovering himself)
In sooth my lord, your witless train do merit
Most heavy chidings, near your couch to suffer
A stranger *with his dagger.*

MEND. I *did not say he bore a dagger.*

DE ZEL. Ha!
In truth, I marked you not.—'Tis a strange tale.
A dagger'd ruffian breaking on your rest,
And hollowing forth I was a *murderer.*

MEND. Murderer?—He said a villain—

DE ZEL. True, most true,—
A villain only—'twas *not* murderer;—
I had forgot myself.—Doubtless, my lord,
It was some maniac, on whose racking brain
Some dark and troubled image dimly press'd,
Of loss that held resemblance to Alonzo's—
For madness, in its wayward potency,
Doth oft transform us to the very agents
Of griefs, whose warp'd and blacken'd thread was wove
In the same web with—But, *you saw no dagger!*

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MEND. None, my good lord.—Doubtless, it was a maniac.

(Mendizabel returns to his seat, conversing with the Court. De Zelos remains alone, in front of the stage, quite abstracted, and evidently meditating on what he has heard. An Officer approaches him slowly.)

OFF. My lord, the court is full, and waits your leisure.—

DE ZEL. (*starting.*) What say'st thou?—*that the Moor awaits my leisure?*

OFF. No, my good lord, I spoke not of a Moor.

DE ZEL. Thou didst not!
Then there are other voices in the hall
Than issue from the lips of those I speak with.

(He takes his seat with much stateliness. Manuel enters on the other side, supported by his daughter. No attendants. Both in deep mourning. One of the Officers comes forward to help him to his seat, which is opposite De Zelos. He declines it gently.)

MAN. I thank you, sir—*I have a* DAUGHTER *still.*

MEND. Before on this strange cause we enter, lords,
'Tis meet I should, in generous sorrow, mourn
The noblest blood of Spain, which should have flow'd
In fair and peaceful channel, fiercely thus
Disparts, and, breaking into various streams,
Dashes its angry waves against itself.—
Would that we might unite their thwarting currents!
But, since this may not be, tell us, Don Manuel,

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What cause of bloody and momentous title,
Against your noble kinsman and your heir,
Doth urge this doubtful charge?

TOR. One
Who, 'mid the wrecks and tempests of the world,
Hath, level still with honour, held his course.

VEL. One whom Cordova, yea, all Spain, rejoices
To see restored to his just dignities,
And hail'd as Manuel's heir.

[*All the council bow to De Zelos.*

DE ZEL. Oh! you flatter me, you flatter me—

MAN. What! sit ye here to flatter or to judge?
Oh ye soiled furs! dishonor'd dignities!
Ye robed mockers of the state ye shame!
With glozing proem of well-sorted words
To make mine enemy shew like a god,
And turn his scaffold to his pedestal—
And bid the summoning trump of judgment flourish
His hollow eulogy in venal courts—
Call you this Justice?—To your trusted hands
She gave her scales, and you weigh falsehoods with them—
She gave her sword, and 'gainst herself you turn it—
Of all her awful ensigns ye retain
Her bandage only: marry, that ye have stolen,
To bind your eyes withal

MEND. From the wild rage
Of impotent, but venerable grief,
We turn in pitying deafness; while our eyes
Are quick and sensitive to its juster calls,

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Be they in temperance uttered—
VIC. Temperance!
My dearest father, even from these bad men,
Who with corrupted souls in judgment sit,
Take the ill-meaning lesson of their wisdom.
MAN. Then here I charge you, grave and reverend men,
Robed in the sanctity of awful duty—
To whose high trust 'tis given the mortal door
To open or to shut—that ye sit there
As men who for their judgment shall be judged—
That ye entangle not the upright spirit
In your fine subtleties—in a web of words
Catch struggling Truth, and leave her there o'erthrown—
Watch verbal flaws, the lapses of the tongue,
And set them down for crimes—and, when Conviction
With conquering step comes rushing on the soul,
Lift in your 'fence a high-held, hollow shield,
Inscribed with quaint Formality's chill name,
And bid her come no further!—
I call upon the spirit of these walls,
But do disdain their forms—
MEND. Do you instruct us in our duty, lord?
MAN. I do instruct you in *your nature, man*—
That, above all your quaint and letter'd forms,
Petty enactments, and the snares of courts,
There is a prior and unwritten law,
Viewless, but legible to the soul's clear eye,
That man eraseless in his bosom bears,
And judges, if they would, might read.
MEND. Well, Sir,

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What says your sapient and oracular law,
That, like the wanderer from Religion's light,
First mocks at forms, and next defies its Judge?

MAN. It tells me by that whisper of the soul,
Which to no ear but mine is audible—
By dark array of thronging circumstance,
Which to the inmost soul conviction brings,
But faulters in its passage to the tongue;
By that untold and thrilling evidence
That wants the witnessing oath, and, wanting, spurns,
Yet calls the bristling hair and quivering nerve
T' attest its stern instinctive potency—
By these, that, feeling, yet ye will not feel,
It tells me that De Zelos is a murderer!—

MEND. Words, words,—what proof of such a horrible charge?

MAN. What proof?—*he hated him*—can he deny it?
Could any but his murderer hate Alonzo?
Nay, smile not at the old man's helpless ravings;
He hated him: for that he was mine heir,
Child of mine age—the bar to his bad hopes—
He hated him!—Why didst thou hate him?—tell me—
I know not the foul secret of *his soul.*
The frown that doomed him is upon thy brow—
The lightning of thine eye that struck him, and parted,
Yet sleeps within its cloud—But I can read it.

DE ZEL. If I have hitherto refrained myself—
If, with check'd tongue and bursting heart, I've sat
To hear my stainless and unblenched name,

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The sport of maniac rage—I pray you, lords,
Wrong not the grave respect I bear your court,
And to aught else ascribe it. Old man, I tell thee
The sheeted bones of our dead ancestry
Do rattle in their cearments at the charge;
Thy desperate breath sounds through our buried line—
Thy blood is in my veins—thou canst not taint them
But ev'ry drop in thine should tingle too!—
We were two branches of the self-same trunk:
The dew was on thy stem, and the fresh wave
Fed it with many waters; the green leaf
Was bright upon thy bough; the trav'ller paused,
And blest it for its beauty. Such wast thou.
I was a blighted branch—the storm was on me;
And in my rifted core the winds of heaven
Sung wintry welcome, and made stern abode.
The mildew'd moss upon my brown sere bark
Made verdure seem like blasting—such was I.
The sun is on me now—the storm on thee—
Bear it as I have borne it.
Must I be broke and gathered for the burning,
Because the bolt of heaven hath smote thy pride?

MEND. My lord, you do with waste of costly language,
Obscure the cause which simpler speech had cleared.

DE ZEL. Well, then, I will be plain;
He says, I slew his son: how doth he prove it?
Lives there another on the earth to beard me
With the bold charge?—(*looks round in much terror, then recovers himself.*)

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Or, if there were, 'tis false—
What proof? still to the proof I challenge him!
Witness or evidence semblative—there's none.
He says I hated him—plotted his death,
Even from his infancy.

PER. He *said not so.*

DE ZEL. Well, well, 'twas meant: look at his muffled head,
Look at the speechless motion of his hand,
And tell me what that means.

"PER. *(aside to Victoria.)* This is most excellent."

DE ZEL. Had I meant so, I had not lack'd the means;
I might have to his sleeping cradle crept,
And with these fingers griped his infant throat.

MAN. 'T'is *false! I watched his cradle.* Alonzo,
Thou wast my child of age, or to the battle
I would have follow'd thee!

DE ZEL. Away, thou dreamer!
I might have bribed the venal slaves around him
To mingle poison with his infant food.

MAN. False, false!—they loved him, aye, the meanest of them,
As his own soul.

DE ZEL. I might have stolen upon his careless steps,
And led them to the stream that bathes his towers.

MAN. Oh, hear him, hear him! hear the man of blood,
Convicted by himself—Could such thoughts be,

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And not their harbour be a murderer's breast?

MEND. Oh shame, thou ancient lord, where is thy wisdom?

With rash and peevish malice dost thou wrest
The generous anguish of an innocent soul
To thine own shame, not his—Be wise!—be wise!

" VIC. First be ye merciful, oh men of subtilty,
" Who know full well how on the jealous ear
" Of fond insanity allusion works—
" The very charge doth cause th' infirmity,
" And makes your hapless victim what you term him."

MAN. I am not mad. I am but miserable.
Yet hear me, lords; hear proof. I had a dream—
[*Much agitation and debility.*
Ye mock me—Yes, I had a dream in the forest—
The voice—the dagger—Oh, that they were here—
Aye, my old brain is wreck'd—all mist and twilight.

[*Increasing agitation; he springs across the stage, and seizes on De Zelos.*

I have but one hope left—*Confess, confess!*
[*Shaking him.*
The eye of God is on thee, and the grasp
Death ne'er unlock'd presses thy throat; confess!—

[*De Zelos remains trembling in his grasp. The Court rises in great agitation, but, not daring to interfere, Ximena faints.*

Think of the hollow, valueless pelf thou sellest
A deathless soul for!—*Hath it made me blest?*—

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Number against thy ducats shrieks of torment—
These must be thine.

[*Changes his tone, and falls on his knees.*

Confess, *and I will bless thee:*
Thy victim's father kneeling here will bless thee!

[*The Court rises to interpose; Manuel waves them off.*

Hush! move not, move not; on your souls I charge ye!—

[*A long pause, Ximena is borne off.*

His eye is speaking, though his writhed lip
Struggles for art's damn'd language—look not on him.

[*A pause.*

If we were in a desart, thou'dst speak true.

[*The Court rises in great indignation.*

MEND. Officers of the Court, perform your duty—
Release the Lord De Zelos!——See, he trembles
Yet from the maniac's grasp—

TOR. It is from rage—

(The Attendants separate Manuel and De Zelos: the former falls into the arms of Victoria, still gazing at de Zelos.)

VIC. *(vehemently)* It is from guilt.

DE ZEL. *(recovering himself)* What should it be but rage?

MEND. Oh, sir, we have too far yielded to his phrensy—
And this wild outrage on all legal form——

DE ZEL. Talk not of legal forms,

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As he hath trampled on my name—Thou dotard!
Ii in thy pithless arm remain'd the nerve
To grasp the shield, or poise the couched lance,
Then shouldst thou feel the weapon truth can wield.

VIC. (*supporting her father.*)
Oh that this woman's arm could but obey
My struggling will!—'twould meet and blast thee, boaster!

MAN. (*raising himself from her arms with difficulty.*)
Villain—I had a son!—I had a son!

DE ZEL. 'Tis meet
I should in this grave council hold debate
With women and with madmen—

MEND. Stay this distemper'd brawling—lords, your judgment:
I need not ask your suffrage—yet the forms
Of law do bind me to administer
An oath to the accused, whereby he clears
Himself of crime, even in the lawless thought
Of the unadvised summoner.

MAN. (*starting forward, and gazing on De Zelos.*)
Will he swear?
(*A long pause: De Zelos in great agitation.*)

DE ZEL. I swear—

MAN. (*in an agony of rage, tearing his hair, &c.*)
Perjury, perjury, by *heaven* and *earth!*—

DE ZEL. To thee I answer not.—My lords, from you
I claim the combat in my honour's right:
'Gainst Manuel's champion let my champion stand

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In mailed proof—and God defend the right!

MAN. I have no champion—on my desolate side
No mailed foot will stand—my shield is fallen;
But with it fell its country's!—Oh, that this call
Might wake Alonzo to——What sound is that?

(Music without.)

MEND. Who wakes that blast of martial minstrelsy?

Enter Perez, who has gone out to inquire.

PER. It is the warlike band that serv'd Alonzo:
In sad and solemn march they onward come:
His broken spear and helm are on a bier;
Round it Spain's noblest warriors, dark and sad,
With trailing lance and low-hung banner, tread
To the near fane upon whose holiest shrine
They've vow'd to place them.

MAN. Said I, I have no son?—I have a thousand!
In ev'ry Spanish soul the offspring lives
Of him whose son bled for his country.

" MEND. My noble lord, *(to De Zel.)*
" It were not wise you did intrust your safety
" To the wild soldiery's enchafed mood;
" Let us retire until this storm be past.

" DE ZEL. I will not move!

" MEND. Oh, yet retire, I pray you!

" MAN. No, let him stay, and look upon his work.

" DE ZEL. *(Struggling with them.)*
" Off, I will stay! no power shall move me hence!"

MAN. Grave Lords, your leave. Go, bid them enter here. I was his father!
My blessing never fell upon his corse—
Let it fall on his bier! [*Manuel starts up.*
(*Enter Soldiers in procession with the bier, &c.—Martial Music.*)
(*To De Zelos.*)
Thou, who hast sworn—now swear thee by *these reliques,*
And I will half believe thee—*Swear, I say!*
(*De Zelos in frightful agitation attempts to advance, but knows not where to place his hand—Manuel seizes it, and places it on the bier.*)

MAN. Here—here— [*De Zelos almost insensible.*
(*Torrismond rushing in.*)

TORRIS. He shall not swear— [*Hurrying him off.*
[*Exeunt, Torrismond bearing out his father insensible.*

MAN. Will he not swear?
Mine be the oath then—Warriors, kneel with me!—
And kneel *thou* too— [*To his daughter, they all kneel round the bier.*
Vengeance! eternal vengeance!
[*The curtain drops.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter De Zelos and two Pages.

DE ZEL. (*thoughtful.*) WHO is the marshal of the lists?

1st PAGE. Toralva.

DE ZEL. Warn him he suffer not the pestilent rabble
To yell their curses o'er the barrier's verge.

1st PAGE. My lord, 'twill be impossible to prevent them,
So much they love Alonzo's memory.

DE ZEL. Curse on thee, slave! thou speak'st some conned lesson
That Manuel's gold hath taught thee—Hence!

[*Exit Page.*

[*To the other.*) Is my son's armour in his chamber? Go—

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Go thou, and tell him to be ready straight.

[*A strange music within.*

Whence was that touch of wild unearthly strain!

PAGE. My lord, your daughter—

DE ZEL. Daughter! I want no daughter.
Where is my son?—Upon a father's cause
His daughter's arm can wield no brand.

[*Exit 2d Page.*

Enter Torrismond, unarmed, dejectedly.

What! still unarmed?

TOR. (*very slowly, and with deep dejection.*)
Within my chamber piled lie plate and mail—
Corslet of proof, and helm and lance, are there—
But I do lack a mighty weapon yet.

DE ZEL. Say'st thou?—What weapon?

TOR. The adamant of an unquestion'd spirit,
That by itself unsmote defies the world.

DE ZEL. (*gasping with fury.*) How!—
List to me, boy!—I would command myself,
Choak in my struggling spirit, which else would burst
In curses on thy foul degenerate head,
But I will master it.—(*with forced irony.*)
Sir, of your fair courtesy,
I pray you, tell me, feels your dainty arm
The sword too heavy in a father's cause?
Oh, it would string the nerves of pithless age,
Brace palsy's arm, and imp the foot of lameness;

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Yea, arm all Nature for me.—But, my son,
(*A pause—he looks at Torrismond.*)
Wilt thou not answer?

TORRIS. (*After a silent struggle, throws down his sword.*)

Thou art answer'd!—

DE ZEL. Take up thy brand again, and plunge it *here! (furious rage.)*

Wretch!—parricide!—Oh, excellently vile!
Fill up thy cup of consummated guilt!
Leave not to Manuel and his furious daughter
This heart to scoop with their infixed fangs;
Pierce it thyself!—Oh, coward!—conscious coward!
I'll peal it in thine ear, like howls o' th' damn'd.
'Tis fear, fear, fear! aye, craven, cowering fear!—

TORRIS. (*starting as from a trance.*)

Coward!—who call'd me coward?
(*Snatches up his sword, and rushes forward—then recognises his father, and falls on his knees.*
'Tis my father!
Heaven holds my arm.—That name hath set me mad!
My swoln and burning throat can't utter it.
(*With a shout of derision.*)
Oh! I do shake the loathed thought from me.
Were you a thousand fathers—
Oh, place me on the kindling ridge of fight,
Where fear was never nam'd or mercy felt,
And feel this heart-pulse, if its quicker motion
Betrays one added throb.
Against the darts of mixed and madding hosts

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Place but one foe, and let that foe be me:
There, if I shrink, the voice that calls me coward
I'll unresenting hear as I do thine.

DE ZEL. Words—words!—the coin boasters pay trusting fools with.

TORRIS. (*kneeling.*) By Heav'n, I am no boaster!
[*Rises eagerly.*

(*Bursts into tears—De Zel. looks at him with scorn.*)
Oh, these hot drops of agonizing shame
Are not the dews of fear; a father's voice
Alone had wrung them; let a father's hand
Dry them, and bless me. [*Kneeling to De Zelos.*

(*De Zelos looks on him for some time, and then says sternly,*)

DE ZEL. Thou weep'st, but 'tis thy father bleeds.
[*Going.*

TORRIS. (*Starting up*) Where goest thou?

DE ZEL. Where?—to the field!—the field my son doth fly from.
Give me thy sword— [*Furiously.*

TORRIS. My father!—but a word—
[*Struggling.*

DE ZEL. Thy sword!—thy sword!—thou hast no need for it.

TORRIS. (*With the most eager expression of hope and joy.*)
What! wilt thou?—canst thou!—darest thou?—
Can it be?

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[*With increasing conviction of his father's innocence, from his undertaking the combat himself.*

Thou wouldst not risk the end of mortal guilt!
Thou wouldst not risk a deathless soul's perdition!
Innocent! innocent! By Heav'n, he's innocent!—
Oh, my abused father!—curse me now,
To ease my penitent agony.

[*Kneels, kissing his hands.*

DE ZEL. (*Coldly.*) I needed not this proof.

TORRIS. I did—Oh, pardon me!—
I'm sheathed in iron now—my sandal'd foot
Could trample hosts—my arm could strive with giants!
Truth holds her bright shield o'er the breast of Torrismond;
Nor does he ask for other panoply—
(*Starting*) My father!—thou lookst ghastlily!—

DE ZEL. (*Gazing towards the door*) No marvel,
I've looked on ghastly sights!—(*recovering*) I'm not well.
This struggle hath o'ercome me, and—'tis o'er.

TORRIS. Oh! pardon me—the doubt was damnable!
It was a crime unfilial and unnatural!—

DE ZEL. Hush!—torture me no more!—Mark me, my son!—
If in the lists thou seest my eye—my lip—
Give speechless sign of inward agony—
(Tho' the vile crowd their vilest comment make)
What wilt *thou* deem it?—

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TORRIS. What should your son deem it?
Perchance a fear (full needless) for his safety—
What other fear could blanch my father's cheek?

DE ZEL. (*Starting, and turning from him.*)
Was that a viewless clarion, dull and deep?

TORRIS. No! 'twas the wind pealing thro' yon low arch!
'Tis a dreary day!—

DE ZEL. (*Looking up*)—A drearier night will follow—
The troubled clouds are in dark volumes sweeping,
As the rent banners of Alonzo's battle
Were hovering o'er us still—'twill be a storm.
(*in great terror.*)
Hast thou not heard, how, mid a combat, Heaven
Hath sent its champion in the lightning's flash,
To strike *upon the right*, and blast the murderer?—
If thou shouldst see my stiff and blacken'd corse
Give dark reflection to the withering bolt,
Outstretch'd in horrid death—

TORRIS. By the hot ashes
I'd kneel, and swear i' th' face of wrathful Heaven
That thou wert innocent—for—*art thou not?*

DE ZEL. (*Embracing him eagerly; then rushing out.*)
That's my brave son—*Oh! what a heart have I!*
[*Exit De Zelos.*

(*Torrismond follows him with his eye, then stands fixed in meditation, not seeing Victoria till she is kneeling to him.*)

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TORRIS. (*rushing out, sees her*) Victoria!

VIC. Yes, Victoria!
Thus pale, and prostrate at *his* feet, who once
Thought the hour lost that was not spent at hers.
'Tis Manuel's daughter trembles in the dust.

TORRIS. Oh! rise, and mock me not to utter madness;
Scarce hath my heart regain'd its trembling seat,
And thou art come to shake it in its hold,
And bid resolved duty blench like guilt.

VIC. Oh! raise me not, for suppliants should be humble.
I was the daughter of a lordly line,
Lov'd by a noble youth—What am I now?
The shunned offspring of a blighted stem,
Who, in the filial agony of soul,
Kneels at the feet of him who said he lov'd her—
Kneels for a father's life—

TORRIS. A father's life!
I go to meet his champion, not thy father!

VIC. He *hath no champion*—they have left him none.
Mad with his wrongs and woes, the ancient man
Comes tottering to the lists—chases away
The weeping few, who still his steps do watch—
Calls *for his son* to brace his shield—then poises
With giddy grasp his lance, and wounds the air!—
Couldst thou see him,
Thou wouldst in tears steep thy averted brand,
Yea, in thy bosom plunge its trenchant point,
Sooner than strike at his.—It is a shrine

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The god has left, but his departed presence
Sheds a sad honor o'er the sunken fane,
Made holier by desertion!—*Spare the ruin!*—

TORRIS. *Spare it!*—I'll kneel and worship it—
Take this; (*the sword*)
And, when I raise it 'gainst that hallowed breast,
May its point turn, and pierce through mine!
(*Kneeling, and presenting the sword to her with enthusiasm. Trumpets sound within.*)

TORRIS. Hark! hark!
Have I not sworn?—Have I no father too? (*rushing forward, and falling on his knees.*)
Thou who hast called me to this horrible conflict,
Let not my breaking heart forbid thy purpose.
(*Rising wildly, and seizing Victoria's hand.*)
I know not how, or right or wrong, but this—
Thy tears, for which my heart sheds drop for drop
(And soon may weep in blood) against a father's,
Wrung from the agony of his pallid brow,
Are weighed in the soul's balance, and found wanting.

VIC. Go, then; but know what enemy awaits thee:
The shield of Manuel is his daughter's breast;
Her streaming hair his banner; and his pledge
The hand her agony raised to thee in vain.
Bear on thy shield emblazed a virgin's heart
Broken for thee. Away! the trumpet summons.
(*Trumpet sounds.—He rushes to throw the sword at her feet; she spurns him. Trumpet sounds again; he catches it up, and rushes out. Exeunt.*)

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SCENE II.

The Lists: Marshals, Heralds, &c.—Flourish.

Enter De Zelos, Mendizabel, Torralva, and Attendants.

MEND. Nay, 'twas a master-touch of curious art
To send th' inflam'd, romantic soldiery,
On the wild summons of a doubtful foe.
Oh, many dangers might have follow'd else,
For they so love Alonzo's memory.—

DE ZEL. Mark me, my worthy lord, this ancient railer,
Not to your courts confines his clamorous outrage;
In your wide streets it bruits, raves thro' your walls,
Teaching the credulous change-loving multitude,
The wealth-swoln burgher, and swart artizan,
Within your crowded, but hushed streets, to throng—
To nod with hollow look—gripe with stern clutch—
Dart dangerous meanings from the speaking eye,
Then part like men whose parting seems to say—
"We'll meet anon to purpose."—Look to this—
Your streets are full of it.

MEND. 'Twere fit that we devise how we may meet
The evil Manuel's restless passion threatens.
What!—Shall we suffer a fond frantic man
To wander up and down the troubled ways,
Madding the citizens with giddy tales
Of crimes, that credulous Wonder thirsts to swallow,
When they are most incredible?

DE ZEL. (*with eager vehemence*)—Banish him! banish him!

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Let me not hear his helpless cries for justice!
By Heaven, I almost pity him myself!

TOR. But how may this be done?

MEND. When the combat
(His madness dreams of hopeless champion in)
Hath summon'd, and th' expected lists are empty,
I will pronounce his exile from Cordova;
Amerce him of his vassals, lands, and towers;
Yea, make him thank us dearly for the mercy
That spares his life, who doth the combat bide,
And whom its issue fails.—

DE ZEL. My noble Lord,
The city well may thank your prudent care.
Yet, let me pray you that your noble pity
Will spare mine ancient kinsman's hapless state.
On Almuntcar's shore he hath a castle,
Whose turrets o'er the moon-light surges cast
The shade that Sorrow loves. There let him wander,
And o'er the moaning waters pour the plaint
Their chiding gives best answer to.

MEND. 'Tis excellent.
Your native policy, my Lord, puts to the blush
Our law-taught Wisdom.

DE ZEL. Oh! 'tis I should blush.
No more—no more, I pray.—Accomplish this,
And my Ximena's hand is thine. [*Trumpet.*
Hark! hark!
You're summon'd to the lists.

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Toralva seats himself as Judge of the Field. Marshals, Heralds, &c.

Perez and Moncalde.

MON. He comes, indeed; but in such mournful guise,
'Twould move an enemy to remorseful pity,
Were not that enemy De Zelos.

PER. They say his reason's clouded—I did fear it.

MON. Clouded indeed! but through the troubled shade
Breaks fitfully at times a struggling gleam,
Feebler than light, and sadder than the darkness.

PER. Tends his sad daughter on him still?

MON. She does.

[*Manuel enters, supported by Victoria, gazing round him unconsciously. Perez and Moncalde seem to be conversing with her on her father's state. Victoria shakes her head mournfully.*

MAN. Why, this is meet;—I love this pageantry.
You're welcome, gentles! lovely ladies, welcome;
I've seen the day I could have hailed your beauties
With gayer greeting, and around the lists
Pranced my proud barb careering.

[*Takes Mon. aside.*

Why is this?
What are they met for, all these gorgeous gallants?
To break a lance, I trow, for some gay dame,
Who is not worth a splinter of a lance.

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Why do they gaze on me? I'm old, but still
They should not make a mockery of my weakness.
MON. Oh! my fallen master! [*Turning aside.*
VIC. Oh! my hapless father,
Retire with me; nay, let me guide you hence!
MAN. Guide me!—I thank you—ha! ha! ha!
Look I like one who needs a guide?—
I thank you for your courtesy, fair dame;
But I would rather have my daughter's care;
She will be here anon.
[*They get about him, and try to lead him away; he breaks furiously from them.*
MAN. I will not stir;—rend from its base yon arch,
And then despair to move me—Off, off, off!
I do not know the cause that brought me here;
But there is something *here* that bids me stay;
I'll tell't anon—treat not an old man roughly.
Thou seemest a gentle dame—have patience with me;
Leave me with her—I'll whisper it in her ear.
(*Whispers Victoria.*)
I came to seek my son; dost know of him?
(*Victoria in an agony of tears throws herself on him.*)
VIC. Oh God!—Oh God!—
MAN. Weep, for those tones resemble
A voice I lov'd, and lov'd it best in grief—
(*Recovering recollection, and raising her hair from her forehead to recognise her.*)
I know thee now—Oh God! my son! my son!
(*Falls back in their arms.*)
TOR. The day doth wear apace. [*Trumpets sound.*

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Torrismond enters armed.

TOR. Herald! demand of yonder knight—
HER. Why comest thou
An armed knight into the mortal lists?
TORRIS. De Zelos' son, heir of a noble line,
Doth claim the combat on his father's right!
My cause is known to all these warlike Judges;
My soul be on the issue.
HER. Valiant knight,
Receive thy brand, and heav'n defend the right.
(*De Zelos rises from his seat, comes to his son, and throws a chaplet round his neck.*)
DE ZEL. My son, around thy warded bosom bear
This brede of many dyes—'tis twined with spells.
TOR. (*flinging it off, and striking his heart*)
Away with it—my talisman is here!
HER. Sound trumpets for th' appellant.
Torrismond's Trumpet blown thrice.—No Answer.
HER. No trumpet answers upon Manuel's side.
MAN. (*repeating the words in feeble despair.*)
No trumpet answers upon Manuel's side!
Give *me* a sword—a sword! [*rushing forward.*
VICT. (*With a shriek.*) Hark!—*'twas* a trumpet. (*A long pause.*)
A Trumpet heard, faint and distant, repeated thrice.
A Knight appears in the lists.
HER. Declare thy name and cause!
STRAN. A stranger-knight—
To all *but one* within these lists unknown—

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I claim the combat in Don Manuel's cause,
And feel his cause is just.

MAN. (*tottering towards him.*) God bless thee, stranger!

STRAN. Away!—Thy touch is as a scorpion's to me.
One boon, ye Judges! I demand to go,
Triumphant or defeated, from your lists,
Unclosed my vizor, and my name unknown.

TOR. Sir Knight, your boon is 'gainst all laws of combat.

DE ZEL. (*vehemently.*) Be it so—be it so—my lords I pray you.

TOR. Then be it so.—Sound for the combat there. (*Charge.*)

(*Fight—the Stranger is defeated.*)

MAN. Treachery! treachery! it was some slave
Whose arm was hir'd to strike the air.

[*The Stranger beckons to De Zelos, who advances reluctantly—the Stranger lifts his vizor slowly to him, and instantly closes it again,—his face is black—De Zelos, staggering with horror, falls into the arms of Torrismond, who supports him.—The Stranger is borne off.*

TOR. I now pronounce the sentence of the field—
De Zelos is acquitted!

MAN. (*deliriously*)———False! false! false!

TOR. Hence, maniac! thank our mercy for thy life!

[*Manuel bursts into all the rage of madness.*

The curtain drops.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

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ACT V.

SCENE I.

" *An ancient Gothic Apartment in the Castle.*

" (*Victoria enters, followed by Perez and Moncalde*
" *bearing lights—she gazes round at the desolate*
" *appearance of the chamber, and speaks to*
" *Perez.*)

" VIC. SET down thy light, and hasten to my
" father.

" (*Perez sets down the light on a table—Victoria*
" *sits down exhausted.*)

" MON. How fares the ancient lord?—How fares
" his mind?

" VIC. I tended him unknown on his sad journey,
" He knew me not, Moncalde!—(*in tears*)
" But, when we reach'd these walls, he turn'd on me
" Such piercing looks of piteous recognition,
" I could not bear the sight, and hasten'd on.
" Had it pleased Heav'n to try us with all maladies
" That shake the frame, and rack the quiv'ring nerve,
" Me his sole watcher, by his straw-wove pallet
" I would have borne and bless'd it.

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" But oh, his mind, Moncalde !—it doth stab me
" To use the language of usurp'd authority,
" Unfilial and irreverent, from these lips,
" Needful to parley with his wayward moods—
" MON. It is a trial sharp and terrible,
" Yet sink not thou beneath it, but have hope.
" VIC. (*Gazing gloomily around the apartment*).
" Is this th' abode to which they have banish'd him ?
" Is this then doom'd my father's last retreat ?
" The gloomy grandeur of its ruined pride
" Might check the pulse of youth, and chill its blood ;
" Yea, unto Fancy lend such wizard potency,
" Unblenched Reason holds weak mastery o'er.
" How will it work on his—(*increasing terror*)
" Dark walls our prison, and perhaps our tomb ?
" The voice of by-gone time, that sweeps your confines,
" Murmurs of deeds long buried in its lapse ;
" Each step I print upon your marble floor
" Seems as it trod the unexplored dwelling
" Of some unearthly tenant, whose roused voice
" Peals on the thunder of the answering echoes,
" To bid me pause—(*gazing round.*)
" MON. Oh, lady ! is it thus
" Thou wouldst uphold thy father's failing steps ?
" Wake from thy fearful vision, for he comes !—

" *Manuel enters feebly, supported by Perez ; they place*
" *him in a chair; he looks round him vacantly.*

" VIC. How fares it with my father ?
" MAN. Very well !

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" VIC. Oh! answer not thus calmly.
" PER. Do you note him?
" He is much chang'd.
" VIC. Oh!—I do dread such change:
" Far more I fear this sullen hopeless melancholy
" Than insane impotence of wildest passion.

" *As she continues to speak, Manuel observes her*
" *attentively, and his countenance becomes gra-*
" *dually illuminated with reason. He turns to her.*

" MAN. You weep; nay, then, your heart's wound
" is not mortal:
" Why do I strike, in vain, this rock for water?
" (*Striking his heart.*)
" Back, back! ye press too much upon my brain.
" PEREZ. This murky chamber's airless gloom
" o'er-powers him.
" VIC. Wilt thou walk forth upon the terrassed
" rampart?
" It still is light abroad, though here is night.
" See! the rich beauty of the ev'ning wooes thee!
" Even the full glory of the twilight Heaven,
" Most beautiful when faint!—Come, ere it fade.
" MAN. *He* loved to gaze upon the twilight Hea-
" ven!
" Beautiful in its faintness. *Then* I lov'd it!—
" VIC. Oh, come with me, my father, forth in
" light,
" And the pure breeze shall whisper healthful thought,
" Cool thy parch'd lip, and fan thy fev'rous breast.—

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" MAN. I've seen the pure breeze lift his raven locks,
" As fairy fingers with their ringlets play'd,
" Enamour'd.—I've by twilight gaz'd on him—
" His eyes' dark glories wild, his godlike form—
" Till love resembled grief, and spoke in tears!
" That dark eye had misfortune's doubtful presage;
" It had that troubled melancholy loveliness;
" 'Twas like the fabled flow'r of woe, that lines
" Of sorrow in its cup of beauty bears.
" Great God!—What man could lift his hand against
" him?
" VIC. Nay, list to me!
" We'll wander forth with light step and free heart,
" Tun'd to impulsive and spontaneous joy;
" Sweetest when most unlooked for.
" MAN. *(Sternly.)* Why should I go?
" I shall meet a father!—he'll cross my path,
" Blessing his age's hope, and leaning on him:
" That blessing will be as a curse to me—
" And, when my lips in agony shape the sound
" That habit still makes sweet—starting, I'll feel
" I have no son to bless!
" VIC. *(Falling at his feet.)* Thou hast a daugh-
" ter!—
" MAN. Where is she?—Yes—but she is not
" Alonzo!
" VIC. Then kneeling hear me—At the solemn rite,
" That peals its requiem o'er the parted dead,
" Be not thou present.
" MAN. Ask Perez if I hold not constant speech:
" Nay, I will be as docile as school'd infancy.

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" PER. Yield to him, lady.
" VIC. (*weeping.*) Oh! my father!—speak not
" With such unnatural humility,
" Torturing your daughter's heart, and she will yield
" To aught you will.—
" MAN. (*on seeing her tears.*) I fear I have of-
" fended!
" I feel I have—I pray you, pardon me!—
" I know I should not kneel, but you will pardon
" me.—
" VIC. Oh! hold!—nor drive me mad—
" MAN. I did not think of thee—
" In my soul's agony forgot thy pangs;
" I saw thy dimmed eye, nor thought thy tears
" Could flow for aught but for Alonzo's loss.
" Torrismond!—aye—he was a gentle youth—
" But was his harvest like Alonzo's gleanings?
" VIC. (*In a sudden agony of tears*)
" I think not of him!—
" MAN. (*Viewing her with doubt and grief*)
" Ah!—thou think'st not thus.
" (*approaching her with melancholy tenderness*)
" Wed him when I am dead!—
" VIC. Rend not my heart in twain—nay, doubt
" me not—
" MAN. *There* is a voice, the only one I hear;
It calls me to his tomb " (*Is rushing out, and feels*
" *his weakness.*)
" But I must lean on *thee!*
" [*Exeunt.*"

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SCENE II.

Gothic Ruins.

In the back ground the Chapel of the Castle, the window illuminated; a low door beneath.

Ximena enters, conducted by a Guide.

GUIDE. Sad lady, wander not on these wild shores,
The sun is sunk—
XIM. Its last and sinking ray
Seem'd pointing to some beautiful world of rest,
Whither its bright steps pass'd.
GUIDE. Thy frame is worn with weariness, and thy strength
Ill seconds the strong purpose of thy will.
XIM. (*advancing feebly*) Kind guide, thy faithfulness and gentle 'tendance
Deserve the meed of my sad confidence—
I am the daughter of a noble house,
By cruel causes urg'd to fly its roof,
Shrouding my sad steps in obscurity.
Perchance thou know'st of consecrated walls
That would receive a wanderer—wipe her tears
In holy charity—and o'er her grave
Bid vestal murmurs breathe chaste melody
For a true maiden's soul!—

Chant of Solemn Music distantly.

Peace to the warrior's soul
In holy slumber laid,
Lull'd by the bells that toll
A requiem to his shade!

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GUIDE. Near to us stands the holy fane thou seek'st,
And to its walls a sad and sacred band
Have in dark pilgrimage come wending on,
To chant a requiem for a warrior's soul.

XIM. A warrior's soul! perchance some hapless chief,
Who perish'd fighting by Alonzo's side!—

GUIDE. 'Tis for Alonzo's self, old Manuél's son!
There stands the castle of his ancestry.

XIM. Are those the towers of Almunecar? those
The ancient seat of Manuel?—

GUIDE. Lady, those—
And deep beneath the rocks that rampart it
Slumber the parted glories of his line.
Sad greeting will the ancient lord receive;
The funeral bell will roll his heavy welcome,
And his first step o'er his son's bier shall totter.

XIM. (*Aside.*) First may it tread on mine!

GUIDE. Whilst thou didst pause
O'er the still beauty of the twilight ocean,
I heard the portal bell give dismal note
That its sad lord approach'd.—

XIM. Hold!—said'st thou not
The funeral dirge shall on this eve be chanted?
Take this—and this—so it may buy my entrance
To the dark spot where rests that empty bier.
A Spanish maid
Would to her country's hero pay a tribute
Richer than all that yet has deck'd his grave.

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(*The Guide points out to her the door beneath the illuminated window. She enters it. Vittoria, Perez, and Manuel, senseless.*

MAN. (*Revives, and breaks from them madly.*)

Back—I say!—the *voice!*—the summoning voice!
The night-raven choaks his scream, and the scared owl
Breaks off his startled vespers—Hark!—it calls!
My soul is with ye—tenants of the darkness
Would that ye were with me!
Oh! that some sound unnatural, life bears not,
Some sound that maddens, and that madd'ning kills,
Were hollowed thro' my brain, and pierced and stunndit:
Oh that I were with those that I have seen,
And answered with the voice that talk'd with me!—

VIC. What voice?—Gentle, my father, come with me;
List to no voice but mine—'tis *mine* speaks with thee.

MAN. Away! the council sends me on a journey,
And we must go.
(*Apparently giving orders to his domestics, and busy giving orders for a journey.*)
Look to your gear—we travel—
The way is wondrous dark, the night is foul.
Who is *that horseman, with such fearful form,*
That rideth headmost of our company?
How fast we skirr along!—I like not this—
Turn back—turn back!—we're on a precipice—
Oh! we are lost,—the dark guide wafts us on—
Oh! they have ta'en the deep and awful leap,

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And I must follow them.—Victoria, hold me!—
Art thou there in truth?—
I am not not mad—not mad—I swear to thee
I heard a voice—nay, do not look on me
With that incredulous sadness—send *them* hence,
And I will tell thee, if my breath can utter it.

VIC. I pray you, speak to me— [*To Manuel.*

MAN. Yes! I will speak to thee—and list thou to me:
They would but mock at me—and I do feel
They have some cause—even in the next sad moment
I may strange converse with those phantoms hold
That cleave the twilight clouds—List to me *now*—
I heard it—in faint dolorous sobs it broke
Beneath his bier—The voice, th' unearthly voice,
Murmured Alonzo's name—*Thou lookest on me.*

VIC. Nay, nay, I look'd not so and yet—perchance—
What if it were the vision of thy fancy?
[*Very timidly and cautiously.*

MAN. Ask thou Moncalde that—Moncalde heard it—
With beckoning hand I called him—bid him listen.
What!—dost thou doubt Moncalde?—Must all ears
That hear the sounds *I* hear be phrensy-struck?
Was he Alonzo's father too?

VIC. (*Struck and overcome*)—Oh pardon me!
Ill stay and watch with thee—I too must hear it.
Should that strange summons come—

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Thou saidst Moncalde on the bell would smite,
Should he that wild voice hear.

MAN. Hush! hush! and listen!

[*He grasps her hand; they remain watching.*

MAN. What if his murderer were lurking there?

VIC. Oh! turn your thoughts from such fond hopeless fancies.

MAN. *(With sudden energetic hope)*
What if he were alive!

VIC. *(In deep anguish)*—Oh! my poor father!

[*The bell tolls.*

MAN. Hark! 'tis the summons—Off!—withhold me not!
Moncalde is not mad—come not thou with me!
Away! away!—

He throws her off, and rushes thro' the door beneath the window—Victoria goes out, calling for assistance.

VIC. Help! help!—Oh! Perez, hear me!

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Vault, with the Monuments of Manuel's family.—Inscriptions and Banners.—Ximena lying extended on Alonzo's Cenotaph.—Manuel enters.—Lamp suspended from the roof of the vault.

MAN. Aye! this is at should be—I am now
In the very central seat and house of horror;

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Bones rattle beneath my steps, and o'er my head
The riven and mouldering banners, wind-shaken,
Flap heavily.—What art thou?—
Awake! awake! the living sleep not here—
What art thou, that with fiend-like mockery scoffest
O'er relics Murder's ruthless hand did spare?—

XIM. Thou knew'st me once—If on thy troubled vision
Trace of these withering features wanders still—

MAN. (*recognising her, and instantly conceiving a purpose of revenge*)
Know thee!—ha! ha!—by my soul's griefs I know thee—
His daughter!—his!—a daughter for a son!
And on his tomb!—Heaven whets the dagger *there!*

(*A burst of wild laughter—he seizes her.*)

'Twere more than man not to be demon here—
As he hath left me hopeless, so shall he
Be hopeless amongst fathers—As his blow,
Struck thro' Alonzo's heart, hath broken mine
Driving me forth a maniac and an outcast
So shall he, in his agony of soul,
Call on his daughter lost, and Echo mock him!—
What hand of death hath led thee here?—Thou worm!
Call on thy saints, and die.

XIM. Strike it home!
Its blow shall not efface Alonzo's image!

(*Kneeling, and presenting her bosom.*)

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MAN. What!—didst thou love Alonzo? truly love him?
Come to my heart, my daughter!—
(*He flings away his dagger, and opens his arms—she rushes into them. A long pause.*)
Aye! he loved thee!
I do remember now—How float the dreams
Of many joys round his recalled image!—
(*Softening—then stamps with sudden recollection.*)
Oh! thy accursed father!—how his hand
Hath broke the ties that bound so many souls!—
XIM. (*bursting out with wild energy.*)
False! false!—unjust and false!—high Heav'n, whose hand
Hath led the sufferer to this wond'rous hour,
Let not her failing strength desert her now—
Oh yet for breath, to speak *my father innocent!*
MAN. Ha! ha! ha!—
XIM. *Alonzo's murderer is within this vault!*—
MAN. The murderer! *whose*?—within this vault? *What vault?*
XIM. Upon the rocky floor, a darkling form,
Bleeding in mortal pangs, extended lies—
And here in agony unutterable
He did declare himself Alonzo's murderer!
MAN. Where is he now?
XIM. Seest thou yon arched vault?
MAN. I can see nothing—mists of eddying fire—
Lead me there, thou—Oh!—that he yet may live!—
Ne'er for Alonzo's safety pray'd my soul

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More fervently—Oh!—that he may be living,
And his last groan make music to mine ear!

[*Exit Manuel.*

Enter Torrismond.

TORRIS. Here doth she bide! Ximena! Sister! hear me!

XIM. Is it my brother?

TORRIS. It is thy brother.
And have I sought, and do I find thee thus,
My own Ximena?

XIM. Nor thine, nor mortal's, now!
Thou must not strive with death. Oh! Torrismond!
The tale that trembles on my dying lips
Waited thy truth to witness it.

TORRIS. What tale?
Rest on my bosom, and be calm!

XIM. I will;
But I must speak, and thou must hearken too—
My message speaks from—Alonzo's sepulchre,
There past my awful night—my last—and there
I met a dying wretch, whose felon-hand
Alonzo's enemy had brib'd to stab him!—

TORRIS. Alonzo's enemy!

XIM. Aye! that unknown
Mysterious being, whom no search hath traced.
Mad with despair, in terrible expiation,
He sought the arm'd lists to perish there.
O'erthrown by thee, he dragged his wounded limbs
To this dread vault.

TORRIS. Give me the villain's name
Who urged him to the deed—Oh, my wrong'd father!

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XIM. An oath had seal'd his lips—he dar'd not speak it,
But to my hands he gave the very dagger
The villain, in unguarded haste, had giv'n him
To do the deed of blood—*His name is on it!*

TORRIS. Quick!—give it me—

(*Snatches, and attemps to draw it.*)

XIM. (*Struggling in death.*) Hold!—On thy soul,
I charge thee!
On its dread hilt he swore me ne'er to draw it
But in the presence of th' assembled Judges,
Dreading Concealment's partial hand.—Swear thou!
Vex not my parting soul.

TORRIS. I solemnly swear—
My sister, ha!—those fixed eyes—
These dews of death—Is there no human help?

XIM. There is no *human* help—My father's innocent.

TORRIS. If ye are men, assist me—bear her hence!

(*They bear her out.*)

SCENE THE LAST.

The Great Hall of the Castle, hung round with Banners and Trophies. A Door leading to Manuel's Apartments in the back Scene. Victoria enters, followed by Perez.

VIC. 'Tis horrible to hear!—I cannot bear it.
And yet that Moorish corse, yet bleeding fresh,
Doth such strange suffrage to his ravings lend,
That reason wanders in credulity,

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And doubt is racked to madness.— [*Horn sounds.*
Whence that summons?

Enter Moncalde hastily.

MONC. Where is my Lord?
VIC. What message claims such haste?
MONC. De Zelos!—
VIC. Ha! De Zelos!
MONC. With a train
Of armed Knights and reverend Counsellors,
Is at the castle-gates, and calls for Manuel.
VIC. Go, Perez, you, and watch my father closely;
Let not the echo of De Zelos' footstep
Approach his chamber.— [*Exit Perez.*
MONC. Wilt thou not retire?—
VIC. No: the last daughter of high Valdi's line
Shall meet the enemy of her fallen house
Even on the ruined threshold of its pride.

Enter De Zelos, Mendizabel, Attendants, &c.

MEND. Unbend your brow, fair dame, nor frown at us,
Who on the duty of our office come.
DE ZEL. My lord, our part no soothing prologue needs
To please a lady's ear—a father's duty
Hath brought me here; nor will I quit these walls
Till their foul prison give me back my daughter,
By force or fraud within their darkness held.
VIC. His daughter! what new scheme of guilt is this?
Or hath the madness of his victim smote *him?*

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DE ZEL. Aye! my lost daughter!—Lady, her I seek—
Here from Cordova's towers her flight was traced;
And there is one who to the vaulted passage
Beneath your walls, betray'd her steps last night.

VIC. Mysterious Heav'n! my father's ravings true.

DE ZEL. Well-painted wonder—Lords, we waste our time
In fruitless parley here—I'll lead your search
From battlement to moat, nor leave unsounded
One nook that Fancy dreads, or Murder loves.

[*He is rushing to the door, Victoria holds him.*

VIC. Hold! hold! for mercy, hold!

DE ZEL. What mystery's here?
Who darkly tenants this forbidden chamber?

VIC. Canst thou not guess? Breaks on thy soul no warning
To tell who dwells here?—*A wretch—a maniac—*
Go meet him, if *thou darest.*

[*Releasing his arm, and pointing to the door, De Zelos pauses; Manuel rushes out, gazing on them.*

DE ZEL. (*Turning away, and addressing Mendizabel.*)
Speak thou to him—I cannot bear his look.

MEN. Ancient and reverend lord, forgive our duty
If its stern forms a shew of roughness bear
Our hearts disclaim—The Lord de Zelos' daughter—

MAN. (*abruptly.*) She's here! I told you so.

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DE ZEL. Do you mark that?
Pursue your search, nor waste another moment.
MAN. Search, search; I'll pass my life in searching with you:
It is my sole employment.
I've dug through earth's dark cavern—smote the void air—
Call'd on the stars—but no where can I find him!
DE ZEL. Hence! will ye wait to hear a madman rave?
MAN. Who made me mad? Go on your hopeless quest—
Pace these dismantled towers, and desolate halls
Thy hand hath made a desert—I will lead ye
Even to the vault—if thou dare follow there—
[*De Zelos shrinks back—Torrismond rushes in.*
TORRIS. Forbear! forbear!
(*with extravagant delight.*)
My father! my Victoria!—hear me!—hear—
Hear, Heaven and Earth—Alonzo's murderer's found!
My father's innocent!
MAN. (*with delirious joy*)
Alonzo's murderer's found!—His father's innocent!
(*Staggers towards De Zelos, who repels him with horror, and fixes a terrible look on Torrismond.*)
DE ZEL. What brought thee here?—
TORRIS. My father! Oh my father!
My wrong'd, my innocent, vindicated father,
Rend not thy hand from me, for it shall bless me—
DE ZEL. Bless thee? (*in horror.*)
TORRIS. List, noble judges, to my tale!

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Even thou, sad Manuel, list! and let thy grief
For once be just:—the wretch who stabb'd Alonzo,
Who in the darkling forest watch'd and smote him,
Bore a commission'd dagger from the villain
Who bribed him to the deed!—that villain's name
Is on the blade inwrought!—that blade I bear,
Sworn on th' impartial hand of power to place it
Unseen, undrawn, unread!—Mendizabel, take it.

(*Kneels and solemnly gives it to Mendizabel.*)

Smile, my lov'd father, smile!—

DE ZEL. (*With convulsive emotion.*) Do I not smile?

[*Manuel deliriously attempts to snatch the dagger, but is repelled by Mendizabel, who gives it back to Torrismond.*

MEND. Draw it thyself,—and clear thy noble father!

TORRIS. I hold th' inanimate, incorruptible witness,
Within my grasp! I draw it from the sheath—
I read the name— [*Drops it in despair.*

VIC. (*Shrieking*) De Zelos!—

MAN. (*Triumphantly*) De Zelos! De Zelos!

[*De Zelos, after an unavailing struggle, falls into the arms of the attendants.*

MAN. Ha! ha! ha! ha!—

[*Laughing madly, and pointing to him.*

TORRIS. (*Catching up the dagger.*)

Thou art a murderer then!—but what am I?—
I am a parricide—let this atone!

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De Zelos, starting from his stupor, prevents him, and stabs himself.

MEN. Bear hence that wretched man!—if yet he lives—

MAN. Lives!—he must live—shall live for thousand deaths!—

Bring racks and fire!—give me your brands, ye slaves!

The Attendants lift up De Zelos, who struggles to hide his face from them, and dies.

MAN. False!—false!—ye cursed judges—do ye hide him?

I'll grasp the thunderbolt—rain storms of fire—

There—there—I strike!—the whizzing bolt hath struck him!—

He shrieks!—his heart's blood hisses in the flame!

Fiends rend him!—lightnings sear him!—Hell gapes for him!

Oh, I am sick with death! (*staggering among the bodies.*)

Alonzo!—Victoria!—I call, and none answer me.

I stagger up and down—an old man—and none to guide me—not one—(*takes Victoria's hand*)—Cold—cold!—that was an ice-bolt!—I shiver—It grows—very dark—Alonzo!—Victoria!—very—very dark—

[*Dies.*

THE END.

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EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MRS. MARDYN.

CLOS'D is the scene; and, hush'd by Death's relief,
Lie *Manuel's* madness and *Ximena's* grief:
Let me then o'er their graves roam broken-hearted,
And read the epitaphs on all departed.

No formal burial needs, for, be it known,
Parnassus has a church-yard of its own;
There, honor'd all, with fitting tombs recline
The fabled heroes of the glowing Nine.
There stands the sepulchre, where Rapture views
Entomb'd the offspring of our SHAKSPEARE'S Muse;
And on its base has many a Bard and Sage
His comments grav'd through every after-age,—
By honoring them, has made himself be known,
And by their names immortaliz'd his own.
There *Norval* rests, there *Zanga's* guilty pride,—
There *Jaffier* sleeps by *Belvidera's* side;
Thence at your potent call they rise, and here
Revive, and live again their short career;
Then sink, as your applause or frowns may doom,
To short repose, or an eternal tomb.
Then let me try to deck with fitting glory
Those heroes who, to-night, have fall'n before you.

Here lies *Alonzo*, slain by murderers grim;
And, faith! but little else is known of him.
He, says Report, was Spain's defence and pride;
His life is hearsay,—but we know he died.
How many men (I thus his moral give)
Live but to die!—The warrior dies to live!

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EPILOGUE.

Here *Manuel* lies; how many a tottering sire,
Of half his years, lacks half his youthful fire?
Was not, speak ye who viewed him through the scene,
His impulse genuine, and his spirit *Keen*?
The moral string our Poet meant to touch
Is that of doting on your *sons* too much.
At his child's death, the widower quitted life;
He'd liv'd for years after he lost his wife!

Here lies *De Zelos*,—a great villain,—granted;
He kill'd the younker whose estate he wanted.
A bungling knave! could he not find, by skill,
Flaw in the deed, or doubt upon the will?
Or, should we on his tomb this axiom carve,
"Better to kill at once than leave to starve?"

Here lies young *Torrismond*, of noble race,
Who fell the victim of his sire's disgrace.
He found, and 'twas enough the youth to stagger,
His father's name upon the murd'rer's dagger.
Take heed, ye sires! ('tis this our Poet aims,)
Have special caution where ye write your names;
And never sign it, thus your children pray,
To any instrument—you give away.

Here doth the mourner, sad *Ximena*, lie
In death;—but hold!—one question—Did *she* die?
What tho' *she* fell, and rail'd on life's restraint,
Women talk thus who only mean to faint.
Well, then, for *her* we'll e'en delay our sorrow,
Till critics ascertain *her* fate to-morrow;
And, if you please, to fix the matter quite,
I'll meet you here again to-morrow night.

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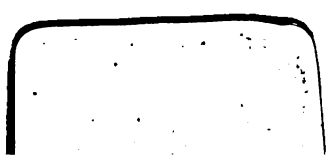

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